



NEWSLETTER OF THE LONDON CHAPTER,  
ONTARIO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
Grosvenor Lodge, 1017 Western Road, London, ON. N6G 1G5  
(519) 645-2844



February (I know, I know!), 1994

94-2

## THE HIND SITE AND TERMINAL ARCHAIC MORTUARY PATTERNS FROM SOUTHERN ONTARIO

William Donaldson

This month we feature a presentation by the Chapter's own Bill Donaldson on the Terminal Archaic mortuary patterns of southern Ontario. Bill and Stan Wortner conducted investigations in the 1970's on the Hind site, near Wardsville, Ontario - a Terminal Archaic site along the Thames River. More recently, Bill has been busy running around the Northeast collecting all the information he can get his hands on regarding the mortuary practices of this very interesting period in prehistory. The meeting will be held on Thursday, April 14th, at the usual time and place (Grosvenor Lodge, 8 PM). See you there!

Next Month: On Thursday, May 12th the Chapter Speaker Night will feature Laurie Jackson, talking on work he has done down in Belize. Start time at Grosvenor is the usual 8 PM.

## HEY!!!! ARE YOUR 1994 MEMBERSHIP FEES STILL OVERDUE?

### Chapter Executive

#### ANNUAL RATES

Individual..... \$15.00  
Family..... \$18.00  
  
Institutional..... \$21.00  
Subscriber..... \$17.00

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## EXECUTIVE REPORT

As we all scratch away at that field itch, waiting for this winter to finally end and field season to begin, its not hard to think of summer "stuff." The Chapter would like to offer members field opportunities for this summer, so if anyone is planning a field project, or would like to Chapter to directly sponsor a project within relatively close access to London, please let the Executive know.

Beyond that, things have been going slowly these days. In this issue of KEWA, readers will find the 1993 mailing list for the Chapter, finally released (and no doubt soon to change with 1994 fees due). Currently, there are 141 members/subscribers of the London Chapter, a comfortable threshold we tend to float around. In case anyone's interested, 10% of our mailings go to people in the U.S., 20% go to the greater Toronto area, 11% go to other regions on the province, or elsewhere in Canada, and 59% go to people in southwestern Ontario. We have 8 family subscriptions and 19 (13.5%) institutional mailings. And on that Note:

## ☺☺☺☺ REMINDER ☹☹☹☹

**IF YOU HAVEN'T YET RENEWED, YOUR 1994 CHAPTER FEES ARE NOW OVERDUE - PLEASE SEND THEM IN TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE EVERY EXCITING ISSUE OF KEWA!!**

## SOCIAL REPORT

Any thoughts on a summer picnic ???

As a service to those interested, and to our friends at the London & Middlesex Historical Society, the following is a list of planned speaker nights for that organization:

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| April 19th   | The Western Heritage Series: The New Campus, 1908-1950 - Al Noon<br>Central Library, 305 Queens Ave., 8 PM                  |
| May 17th     | 50th Anniversary of D-Day - Alastair Neely & speakers from the First Hussars<br>399 Ridout (the Old Court House), 8 PM      |
| June 11th    | Spring Bus Tour of Historic Elgin County<br>399 Ridout (the Old Court House), bus will depart at 9 AM from the parking lot. |
| October 18th | London and Area Dance Bands and Dance Halls - Dr. Morris Wearing<br>399 Ridout (the Old Court House), 8 PM                  |

## EDITOR'S REPORT

This month we offer a report from Shawn Austin on a small but interesting Archaic lithic scatter from the City of Brantford. These small, single event sites are critical if we're ever to make any sense out of longer-term occupations. Also, we are provided with the brief reminisces of resident MTO regional archaeologist, Paul Lennox, who, speaking of itching to be in the field, has a bad case of spring fever-itis right around now!

# **SALVAGE EXCAVATION OF THE HARDY ROAD SITE (AgHb-190), A MIDDLE TO LATE ARCHAIC LITHIC SCATTER ON THE CENTRAL GRAND RIVER**

Shaun J. Austin

## **Introduction**

In 1993, an archaeological assessment conducted along a section of the Brantford Northwest Industrial Area Sanitary Sewer corridor, between the Grand River and Hardy Road, resulted in the discovery of the Hardy Road site (Archaeological Services Inc. 1993a). Subsequent test excavations failed to reveal temporal or cultural affiliation of the site, but did demonstrate that the threatened portion of the site warranted comprehensive salvage excavation, which was subsequently conducted on the site. The following discussion summarizes our findings.

## **Background Research**

The Hardy Road site is a lithic scatter located along the spillway of the Grand River, within the Norfolk Sand Plain physiographic region (Chapman and Putnam 1973:175; see Figure 1). The site lies on a broad, relatively level terrace that overlooks the present floodplain. Sizeable wetlands are still extant along the Grand River and, prior to historic land clearance and drainage, it is likely that wetland flora would have occupied most of the bottomlands of the Grand. Above the floodplain terrace, the landscape would have been dominated by mature hardwood forests. The Hardy Road site was therefore advantageously located at an ecotone or biotic edge, allowing convenient access to both upland and bottomland ecosystems. Such areas are typically prime habitat for a diversity of faunal species owing to this local variety of biotic zones.

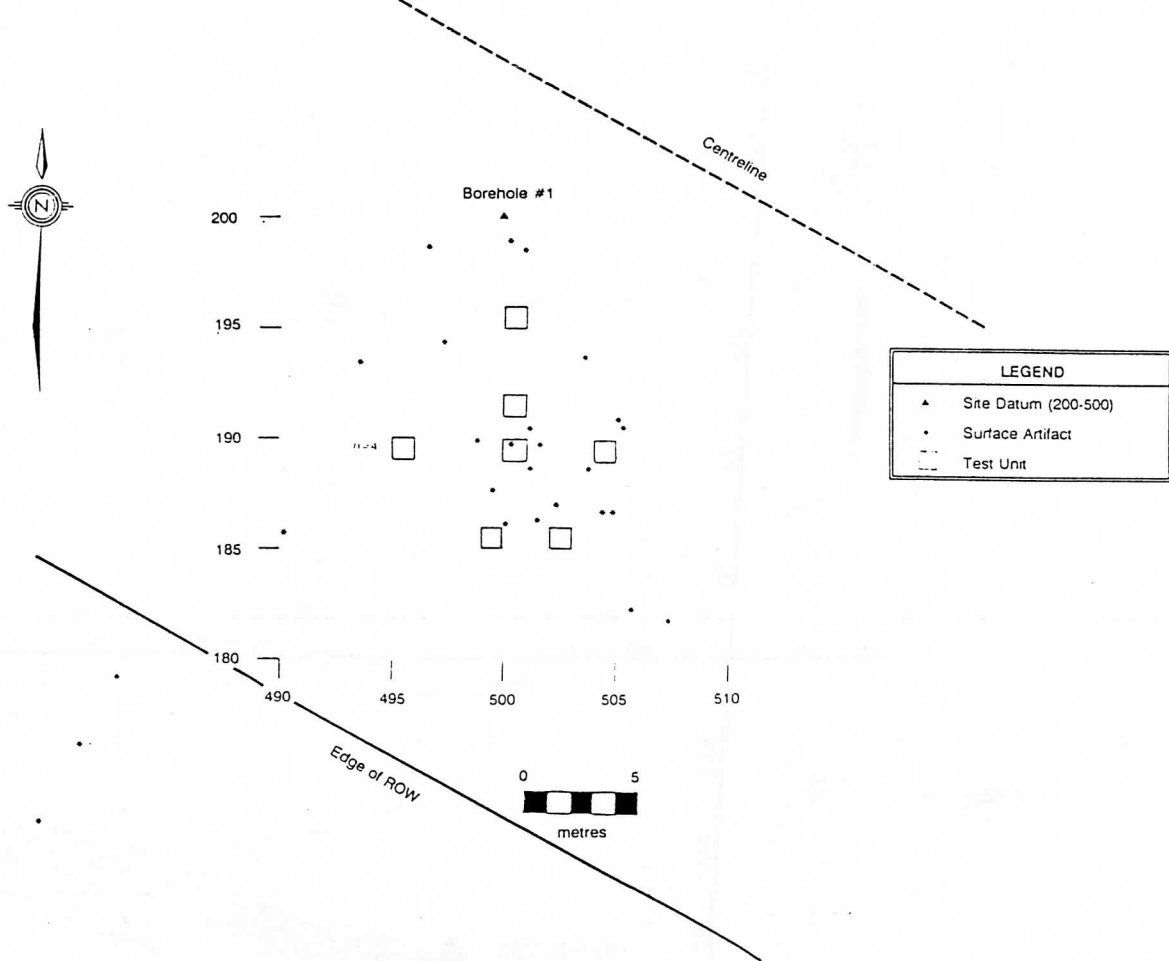
The core area of the site lies on a gentle southeast-facing slope, to the south of, and slightly below, the summit of a small knoll. A swale, running from northeast to southwest, appears to correspond with the eastern and southern limits of the scatter. The western bounds do not appear to be defined by any topographical feature.

## **Field Investigations**

The Hardy Road site was registered in 1993 by Archaeological Services Inc. (ASI 1993a). During Stage 2 and 3 investigations at the site, approximately 150 lithic artifacts were recovered from the ploughed and weathered surface of the site, primarily from seven one-metre square test units excavated to subsoil (ASI 1993a, 1993b; Figures 2 and 3). Indeed, the Stage 3 artifact yields were surprisingly high compared to surface recoveries (Figures 2 and 3).

Onondaga chert dominated the assemblage, but artifacts of Kettle Point and Ancaster chert have also been identified. These artifacts were distributed over an area of approximately 980m<sup>2</sup> within the right-of-way for the sanitary sewer. The core of the site, however, encompassed an area of only 400m<sup>2</sup> (Figure 2).



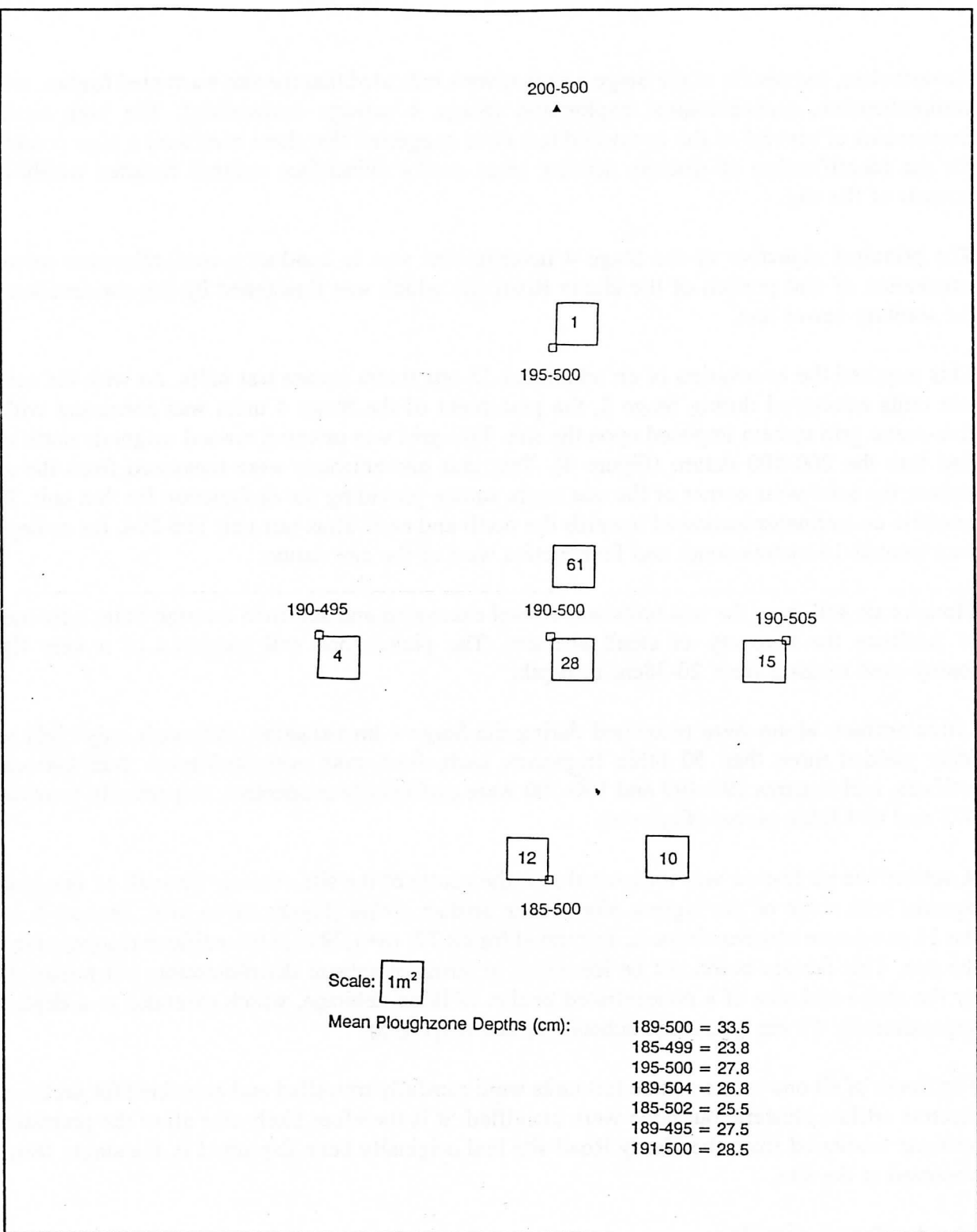


**Figure 2:** Stage 3 Investigations of AgHb-190: Controlled Surface Collection and Test Excavations.

The location of each surface artifact and test unit was systematically recorded using a transit and tape, measured from a datum (200N-500E) established at "Borehole #1" (Figure 3). These data helped the investigating team to estimate the extent of the site, and to locate any significant artifact concentrations.

No formal tools were present within the artifact assemblage recovered during Stages 2 and 3, preventing any estimation of the site's temporal or cultural affiliations. Likewise, the artifact assemblage was too small to provide a basis for any conclusions regarding site function or the nature of its occupation(s).





**Figure 3:** Test Unit Artifact Yields and Ploughzone Deposits.

Nevertheless, the results of the Stage 3 excavations indicated that the site warranted further, more comprehensive, archaeological exploration (Stage 4 salvage excavation). The high artifact frequencies of several of the excavated test units suggested that there remained a high potential for the identification of discrete activity areas and/or subsurface cultural features within the bounds of the site.

The principal objective of the Stage 4 investigation was to conduct a comprehensive salvage excavation of that portion of the Hardy Road site which was threatened by the construction of the sanitary sewer line.

This required the excavation of an additional 55 one-metre square test units. As with the seven test units excavated during Stage 3, the placement of the Stage 4 units was consistent with a five-metre grid system imposed upon the site. This grid was oriented toward magnetic north and tied into the 200-500 datum (Figure 4). Test unit proveniences were measured from the site datum, the southwest corner of the one metre square providing the designation for that unit. The numeric co-ordinates increased towards the north and east. Thus test unit 186-504, for example, was located 14 metres south and four metres west of the site datum.

Ploughzone soil from the test units was shovel excavated and screened through 6mm wire mesh to facilitate the recovery of small artifacts. The ploughzone soil consisted of a very light loamy-sand ranging from 20-38cm in depth.

Lithic artifacts alone were recovered during the Stage 4 investigation. Although only eight test units yielded more than 50 lithic fragments each, four units contained more than 100 such artifacts, and Squares 190-499 and 190-500 were particularly productive, respectively providing 472 and 694 lithic pieces (Figure 4).

A subsurface pit feature was uncovered near the centre of the site, directly beneath 11 one-metre squares with some of the highest ploughzone artifact yields (Figure 4). In total, Feature 1, and the 11 one-metre squares above it, accounted for 68.7% ( $n=1,793$ ) of the artifacts recovered from the site. This feature could not be identified in terms of subsoil discolouration, but rather only by the shape and size of a concentrated pocket of lithic debitage, which extended to a depth of approximately 61 cm below the subsoil surface (Figure 5).

The floors of all one-metre square test units were carefully trowelled and examined for additional discrete artifact clusters, but none were identified. It is therefore likely that all of the prehistoric artifacts recovered from the Hardy Road site had originally been deposited in the single feature observed at the site.

### **The Artifact Assemblage**

Table 1 presents a summary inventory of all artifacts recovered from the Hardy Road site during the Stage 4 salvage excavation. Descriptions of collections from the Stage 2 and 3 investigations may be referred to in Archaeological Services Inc. (1993a, 1993b).





194 -



193 -

192 -

191 -

190 -



- 501

Archaeological  
Services  
Inc.



x LITHIC TO DEPTH OF 5cm

• FIRE CRACKED ROCK

SCALE

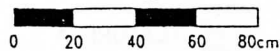
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Figure 5: Plan View of Feature 1.

**Table 1:**  
Hardy Road Site (AgHb-190) Artifact Summary (Stage 4)

Artifact Category	Frequency	Percentage
Projectile Points & Fragments	4	0.15
Formal End Scrapers & Side Scrapers & Fragments	9	0.34
Spokeshaves	2	0.08
Bifaces & Fragments	3	0.11
Retouched & Utilized Flakes/Fragments	80	3.07
Secondary Retouch Flakes/Fragments	313	11.99
Secondary Knapping Flakes/Fragments	233	8.93
Primary Thinning Flakes/Fragments	67	2.57
Primary Reduction Flakes/Fragments	21	0.80
Cores	15	0.57
Hammerstones & Manos	4	0.15
Shatter	1859	71.23
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2610</b>	<b>99.99</b>

A total of 2,610 chipped and ground stone artifacts was collected. The formal tool categories include: projectile points (n=4; Figure 6.a, b), end and side scrapers (n=9; Figure 6.c, d), and spokeshaves (n=2). Other chipped stone artifacts include: crude bifaces (n=3), retouched or utilized flakes (n=80), cores (n=15), primary reduction flakes (n=21), primary thinning flakes (n=67), secondary knapping flakes (n=233), secondary retouch flakes (n=313), and shatter (n=1,859). Ground stone artifact categories include 3 hammerstones and 1 mano.

Onondaga chert comprises 53.8% (n=1,402) of the chipped stone lithics. Although small quantities of Selkirk chert and Flint Ridge chalcedony were also recorded, the balance of the chert types present within the chipped stone category cannot be ascertained without a more in-depth analysis employing an extensive reference collection.

There is relatively little evidence of heat treatment, with only 17 chipped stone pieces exhibiting potlids. One interesting aspect of this collection is that 11 chipped stone specimens display an unidentified (organic?) encrustation (eg. Figure 6.d).

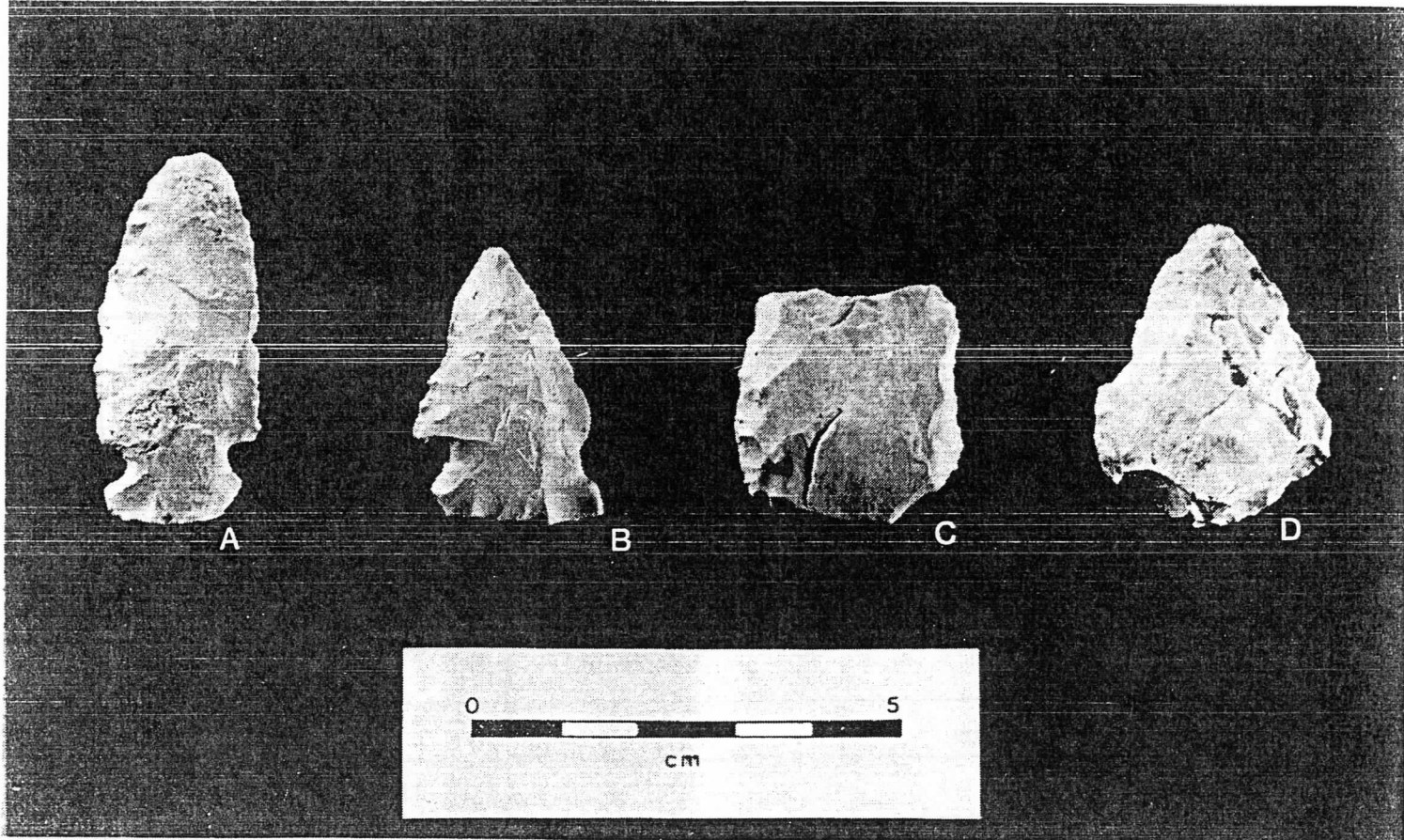


Figure 6: Projectile Points (a and b), and End Scrapers (c and d) From AgHb-190.

The ratio of all secondary flakes ( $n=546$ ) to all primary flakes ( $n=88$ ) is approximately 6:1, strongly suggesting an emphasis on the secondary stage of the lithic reduction sequence at this site. Furthermore, there were 313 secondary retouch flakes, indicative of tool refurbishing and resharpening.

While two of the four projectile points recovered are crudely fashioned and fragmentary specimens, the other two are culturally, or temporally, diagnostic. One of these (Figure 6.a) is a side-notched, basally-thinned specimen, manufactured from an unidentified chert. It measures 44mm in length, 19mm in width, 7mm in thickness, and has a notch width of 12mm. Determining cultural-temporal affiliations for such a point is difficult. Generally, it may be associated with several different periods of the Archaic, or even with the early Middle Woodland.

However, I would suggest that this artifact resembles a Late Archaic Narrow Point of the period *ca.* 4,500-3,800 B.P., or 2500-1800 B.C. (Ellis et al 1990); or alternatively, may be a Brewerton-like Middle Archaic projectile point of the period *ca.* 5,000-4,500 B.P., or 3000-2500 B.C. (Ellis et al 1990).

The second diagnostic projectile point (Figure 6.b) is also side-notched and basally thinned, but is manufactured of Onondaga chert. It measures 33mm in length, 20mm in width, 7mm in thickness, and has a notch width of 6mm. It also could fall into several broad categories of point type, however, it appears most likely to be a Brewerton-like Middle Archaic projectile point of the period *ca.* 5,000-4,500 B.P., or 3000-2500 B.C. (Ellis et al 1990).

On the basis of the two diagnostic projectile points described above, the Hardy Road site would appear to have been occupied as early as *ca.* 3000 B.C. Given the dry, level, riverside terrace offered by the Hardy Road site, it is likely that this area was a favoured campsite for river travellers in prehistoric times. The Grand River was undoubtedly a major thoroughfare in antiquity for hunters and traders moving between Lake Erie and the interior of the Ontario peninsula. However, the artifact distributions and settlement features observed at the Hardy Road site would tend to favour an interpretation of the site being occupied during a single occurrence.

One of the principal activities at such riverine campsites would have been the refurbishing and resharpening of stone tools. The single, deep feature identified at the Hardy Road site may have been excavated primarily in order to dispose of lithic shatter and other chipping debris, but it may also have served as a storage area for the various useable chert cores and larger chert fragments which were also recovered.

## Summary

That portion of the Hardy Road site previously threatened by the construction of the sanitary sewer line for the Brantford Northwest Industrial Area has now been salvage excavated. Although there was no obvious subsoil discolouration, a single deep feature was identified at the site. It is contended that the majority of the lithic artifacts recovered from the site had originally been deposited within this pit, including two diagnostic projectile points. It may be that these two points reflect use of the pit, and therefore occupancy of the site, during both the Middle Archaic period (5,000-4500 B.P.) and the Late Archaic (Narrow Point) period (4,500-3,800 B.P.), or alternatively, if the two points are typologically similar, they would indicate that the site was occupied only once. In any event, the artifactual and settlement pattern evidence recovered from the Hardy Road site has added a great deal of valuable new information to our understanding of the Archaic period occupations along the central Grand River.

## References

Archaeological Services Inc.

1993a A Stage 2 Archaeological Resource Assessment of Draft Plan of Subdivision of the Northwest Industrial Area, and of the North West Industrial Area Sanitary Sewer Route

(from the Grand River to Hardy Road), City of Brantford, County of Brant, Ontario. Report submitted to the Ontario Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation.

- 1993b A Stage 3 Archaeological Resource Assessment of the Northwest Industrial Area Sanitary Sewer Route from the Grand River to Hardy Road (Site AgHb-190) City of Brantford, County of Brant, Ontario. Report submitted to the Ontario Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation.

Chapman, L.J. and D.F. Putnam

- 1973 The Physiography of Southern Ontario. Second Edition. University of Toronto Press. Toronto.

Ellis, C., I. Kenyon & M. Spence

- 1990 The Archaic. In: **The Archaeology of Southern Ontario to A.D. 1650** (edited by C. ellis & N. Ferris), pp. 65-124. Occasional Publications of the London Chapter, OAS, Number 5.

# THE MEDWAY CELT

Paul A. Lennox

Archaeological survey was conducted for the Ministry of Transportation over a small area adjacent to Highway 23 where it crosses the channelized Medway Creek/Elginfield Drain just north of the City of London, Ontario. While the recovery of a celt and a piece of Kettle point chert cannot be considered of great importance to the prehistory of the province, the celt is beautifully made and unusual in some respects.

It was April 9th 1993, a bit cool and wet but the sun was shining and a small survey request on my desk got the better of me - spring fever - for those of us who are strapped to the desk for most of the winter months. The job was a small one, a temporary detour required while the bridge was to be reconstructed, but the work was to occur in an area with "archaeological potential", given the nearby watercourse and the presence of the Lawson site (Wintemberg 1939) about 10 km downriver.

The celt is made of a light green and dark grey, finely banded slate. Typically, it shows evidence of having been chipped and subsequently ground into shape, probably from a beach cobble that was not too much larger than the finished tool. The celt measures 107 mm long and 58 mm in maximum width just proximal to the finely honed and asymmetrically biconvex blade edge. The specimen tapers gradually to 39 mm in width toward the poll end where maximum thickness is 23 mm.

So far the Medway celt is not significantly different than thousands of others many of us have seen, however, what makes this specimen of particular interest are the peck marks and pecked depressions that occur on both faces. This pecking was seen in the field and was thought to represent the remnants of the shaping technique common to many heavy stone forms. However, as the soil was carefully washed from either face of the tool back in the lab, these small peck marks appeared to have been formed after the surface of the celt had been ground smooth. The peck marks concentrated in the centre of either face of the celt to form depressions about 20 mm in diameter and 3 mm deep (Figure 1).

The purpose of this modification is unknown. If the pecked depressions occurred on a cobble the artifact would be regarded as a pitted anvilstone or "nutting stone" (Waugh 1916:185). In association with this tool, interpreted as a skinning stone, the depressions likely served to provided a better grip when the tool was hand held during use.

## References

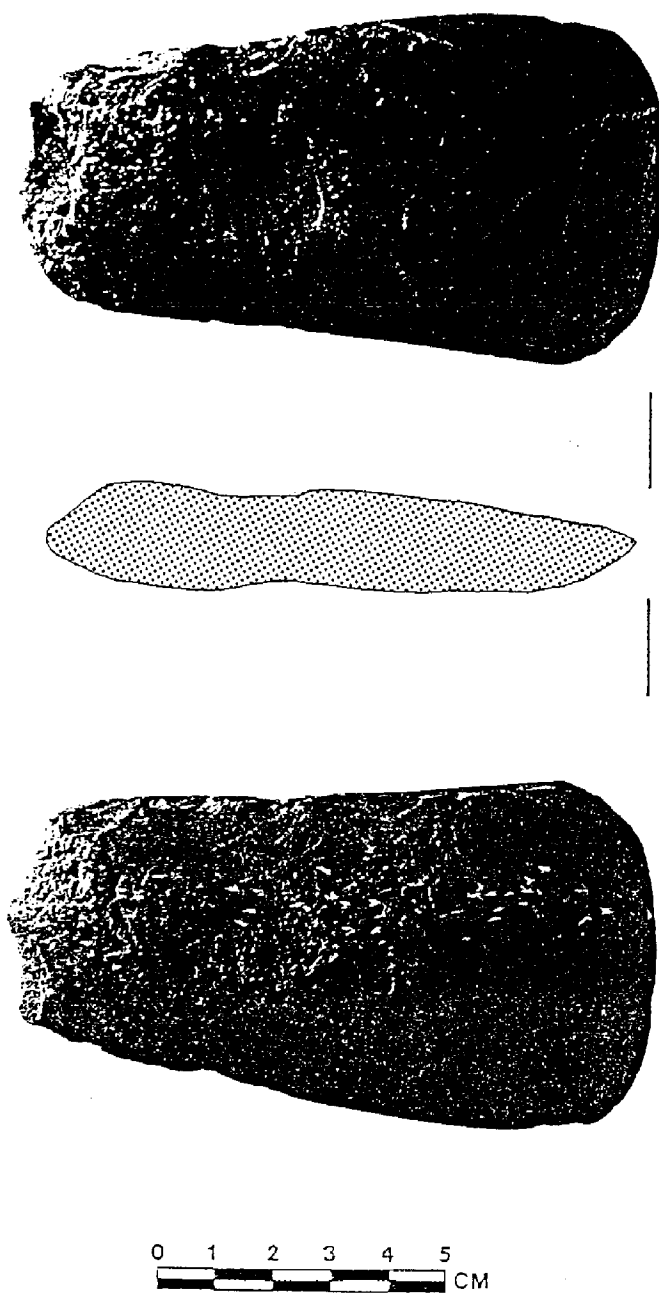
Waugh, F.W.

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Wintenberg W.J.

1939 **Lawson Prehistoric Village Site, Middlesex County, Ontario.** National Museum of  
Canada Bulletin 94.



**Figure 1:** The Medway Celt.